

In regards to the current proposal to relax ownership requirements for local television broadcasters:

1) The results of "competition" in local radio caused the following to occur in the local market: loss of local programming (for example: classical station disappeared); proliferation of talk shows and reduction of news coverage; local DJ's replaced by a DJ from another station owned by the same company that owns the local station ("cost cutting" move). It is imperative to avoid such consequences in television broadcasting. Competition is desired, but not the type that occurred with radio, as what is now present in this market is uniformity, not diversity.

2) Communications are critical to diverse thinking. By relaxing the standards now in place, the unintended consequence limiting "diverse" opinions is the likely result. This is less injurious to large markets; devastating to small markets where the local station may be the only access to local issues.

I request the FCC to resist relaxing the ownership rules. We must protect not only "free speech" but also the access to "free speech" afforded all communities by the diversity of ownership. Prevent the unintended consequences that occurred by relaxing ownership in the radio market from happening to the television broadcast market. In these troubled times, all sides of an issue need to be heard in sufficient detail to allow citizens to render an informed choice. It does none of us good to lose news broadcasts in favor of "talk" shows; nor is the public served by having "one" opinion dominate. While this is not intended, cost savings makes "one" opinion more likely.

Sincerely,

Joan Johnson